The Prisoner's Retort.

It is a prison's chaplain's duty to give a departing prisoner good advice and to exhort him to be a decent and honorable man in the future. In the course of one of these interviews a chaplain said, "Now, my friend, I hope you'll never have to come back to a place like this."

The prisoner looked at him thoughtfully and then asked "I say, chaplain, you draw a salary here, don't you?" When the chaplain replied in the affirmative the prisoner remarked, "Well, say, if me and the other fellows didn't keep coming back you'd be out of a job."

In Vacation Time.

"Are you familiar with "The Man Without a Country?" asked the student of English literature.

"No," replied the pretty summer girl, "but I am familiar with the country without a man."—Life.

Feeling Better.

"Senator," asked the reporter, "what do you think of our political future now?"

"Well, young man," said Senator Kiequer, brightening up, "I don't think we'll do any more benevolent assimilating for a few years, at all events. With the retirement of Mr. Bonaparte will go the last vestige of imperialism in our government."

Not What It Is For.

The recent sale of the library of William Cullen Bryant by the executors of his daughter's will has elicited an amusing reminiscence of the late Miss Julia Bryant in her childhood. An aged lady, who was for a time a neighbor of the poet and his family, had been shown into the parlor of the house, where she was making her first call.

She found the small Julia seated on the floor with an illustrated volume of Milton in her lap. Although she knew, of course, that it must be the artist, not the author, in whom at that early age the child was interested, she asked genially, by way of beginning an acquaintance:

"Reading poetry already, little girl?"

Julia looked up and regarded her gravely. Then she explained, with an air of politely correcting inexcusable ignorance:

"People don't read poetry. Papas write poetry, and mammas sing poetry, and little girls learn to say poetry, but nobody reads poetry. That isn't what it's for."

Another Breakdown.

It seemed an age that the poor man was flat on his back. His friends stood around him with long faces heaving lugubrious sighs.

It was, indeed, a serious case.

But suddenly there came a shout from the prostrate form.

"At last!" he shouted, triumphantly. "At last I have that old carbureter fixed."

With a wild whoop his friends brushed the dust from his back and they all piled into the big red machine and sped away.

Drawing the Line.

"I don't mind listening to a man who is paying for my dinner tell me the story of his life," said the woman. "Men's lives are generally interesting, but I won't stand to hear a woman tell everything she knows, even if she does pay for my dinner. I'd rather pay for my own dinner and get an occasional shy at the conversation."

Aunt Diana

The Sunshine of the Family

CHAPTER XXIV.—(Continued.)

It was pleasant to Alison to see her brother's quiet, respectful manners, so full of reverence for that wise and dignified old age, and the evident gratification with which Mr. Moore listened to him. She might almost have believed herself forgotten, but that every now and then the thin hand passed lightly over her hair with a caressing touch which told how he loved to feel Sunny near him again. Greville kept a little aloof from them, but not a movement escaped his notice. Once Alison glanced in his direction and met a grave, touched look in his eyes, as though something moved him.

Miss Carrington presently came in to see after her charge, for such she evidently considered the old man, and dispersed the little group. Mr. Moore must have his noonday rest, and then he would be well enough to play to them in the evening, but he had talked to them sufficiently for the present.

The rest of the morning was spent in tennis, and in the afternoon Miss Carrington joined them, and Greville and Roger rowed them to the Long Island, that Alison might revisit her old haunts, and the evening was spent at Fernleigh.

This was Greville's only idle morning; for the future he adhered steadily to his determination to work until luncheon, and as Alison resumed her old habits of painting under Aunt Diana's supervision, or playing to Mr. Moore or reading to him, Roger found himself left to his own devices.

He took Miss Carrington's advice and lived in the open air, either lying on the lawn with a book or paddling himself lazily in a canoe, till his face was brown and ruddy with health, and he grew as light hearted as a boy.

In the afternoons and evenings the three young people were always together. Tennis and boating or drives in Greville's dog cart filled up the afternoon. When Mr. Moore was pretty well the evenings were always spent in his room; sometimes he played on his violin while Alison accompanied him, or one of the young men read aloud while the ladies worked.

The old man always retired early, and then sometimes Greville would tempt them to a moonlight row or stroll, or if Miss Carrington refused this for herself and Alison, Roger and he would pace the garden in animated conversation.

The young men had become great friends. Greville, who was a few months older than Roger, always acted as though he were younger. Roger was full of quaint drollery, and loved fun in his own way, but Greville's spirits were liable to carry him laway; he had plenty of character, but Roger's grave solidity and greater thoughtfulness were uncommon at his age; nevertheless Greville's gayety and natural exuberance covered a depth of feeling that would have astonished people. "A man is a man for a' that," he would have said if any one had accused him of too much love of play; that he played well in his youth was no argument against his working well by and by. "Young growing things must stretch themselves," Miss Carrington used to say in loving extenuation of her favorite.

When a good woman thinks well of a man there can not be much amiss with him. Miss Carrington always said Greville was a fine creature, and she had tolerably shrewd judgment of her own.

Aunt Diana had resolved that Roger and Alison should have as much play as possible, so she not only revived her Wednesdays, but she gave a boating party and a large picnic. Roger was a great favorite with the ladies, old and young, though he could not compare in good looks with Greville, but his honest face and courteous manners—the manners bred of a perfectly kind heart—won golden opinions, but Miss Carrington, who had reasons of her own for watching him, could not fail to notice that though he was pleasant to all the young ladies, he did not single out one as an object for any special attention, while on the contrary, Greville was always beside Alison.

She drew her own conclusions, but made no remark. She always said: "It was like brushing the golden dust off a butterfly's wing to speak of such things to young people before their time." But her heart was very full sometimes when she looked at Alison. "I will not speak to her; when the time comes, she will seek me of her own accord," she thought; "there are some things I can not teach her, that every woman must learn for herself."

That time came sooner than she expected.

One evening she was sitting alone in the studio, writing a letter to her brother-in-law, when she caught a glimpse of Alison's white gown flashing between the shrubs, and in another moment the girl came swiftly through the conservatory, and stood beside her.

"Aunt Di, I want to speak to you."

"One moment, Allie; I have just finished my letter to your father. Have you any message for him?"

"Yes—no—oh! I can not think of one just now," she said, in such a trembling voice that Miss Carrington looked up quickly, and what she saw in Alison's face made her drop her pen.

"Come and sit here, darling, and tell me all about it," and as Alison hid her burning face, drawing down Aunt Diana's hands, as though they would shield her effectually, she continued, tenderly, "Don't be shy over it, Allie. Of course I know what it is; Greville has been speaking to you?"

"Yes, Aunt Di."

"Well, I will scold him presently for not speaking to me first." But there was no anger in Aunt Diana's eyes. "I dare say his grandfather encouraged him; he is so set upon this. Well, Allie, and what did our boy say to you?"

"Oh, Aunt Di, don't ask me," returned Alison, desperately, "he thinks too highly of me. I am not as good as that; I don't deserve it all."

"We must allow for a little exaggeration under the circumstances,' returned Miss Carrington, smiling, and managing to free her hands, and so get a glimpse of the hidden happy face.

"But, Aunt Di," almost whispering, "are we not too young? Greville will have to be at Oxford another year, and —and——"

"Too young to marry just yet, Allie, but I think, under Greville's peculiar circumstances—his grandfather's great age and precarious health, and his loneliness, having no parents or brothers and sisters belonging to him—that an engagement might be allowed. It will make him happier, and give him heart for his work. In general, Allie, I do not approve of long engagements for young people, they are so unsettling; but you know Greville's circumstances as well as I do. He is his grandfather's heir; in two years he might well marry."

"Then you approve?" raising her eyes at last to her aunt's face.

"Don't you know Greville is my own boy? He is even dearer to me than you; you must not be sorry to hear that. One day I will tell a sad little story about myself, how a girl's self-will and temper lost her the noblest lover a woman could have."

"I guess who it was; I always knew," murmured Alison.

"Greville is dear to me for his father's sake," returned Miss Carrington, almost solemnly. "No more of this just now, Allie. If you love me, dear child, you little know how happy it makes me to know my two darlings are to be united."

"Really and truly happy, Aunt Di?"

"Yes, surely, dearest; and this has been the wish of Mr. Moore's heart. Ah, here comes Greville; he looks almost as shy over it as you do, Allie."

But, shy or not, there was no mistaking the expression of proud happiness on the young man's face. A look passed between him and Miss Carrington, and then she held out her hand.

"Well, Greville, have you come to be scolded?' she asked, playfully.

"Yes, but you would not have the heart to do it," was his reply. "Cara," with a pause on the old name, "how could I help it?" And his glance was sufficiently eloquent.

"Well, Greville, I think you are worthy even of her." And now something like the glimmer of unshed tears softened the keen gray eyes. "God bless you, my boy! you have fulfilled the great wish of my heart."

There was a little more talk after this, and then Greville said, "Alison, I think we ought to go to my grandfather; this will make his very happy." And then Alison obediently rose.

There was a touching scene with the old man. "When the messenger comes, my boy will not be left desolate, he will have Sunny to comfort him," he said. And again his hands were placed on her bright hair to invoke a blessing.

Roger's turn came next. He had been out all day on a fishing excursion, and on his return Greville had waylaid him, and told him the news. Alison, who was sitting at her window, trying to compose her fluttered spirits, saw them coming up the garden walk together, and a few minutes afterward there was a hasty step at her door, and Roger burst into her room.

She knew how glad he was by the way he took her in his arms and kissed her, even before he had uttered a word.

But it came at last.

"Allie, I never was so pleased in my life. Of course I knew it was coming. He is a fine fellow; you are giving me just the sort of brother I wanted, and I am greatly obliged to you."

"He told you then?" a little bashfully.

"Yes, he had been waiting ever so long by the river bank. It is my belief that, like King Midas, he had been whispering his secret to the rushes. I wish you could have heard what he said about you. He has thoroughly convinced me that he fully appreciates you."

"I am so glad you will be friends," returned Alison, simply, quite ignoring the latter part of Roger's speech; in her modest opinion of herself, she never ceased wondering at Greville's lover-like speeches; it was dear and kind of him to say such things, she thought, but she did not deserve them.

She said as much to him one day, when their engagement was but a week old, but he turned decidedly willful.

"I shall think of you just as I like," he said, quietly, "and I know I shall never alter my opinions. I don't care what your faults are; you are perfect in my eyes, just because you are Alison." And after this she gave up the point.

But on the evening before she left Moss-side she and Aunt Diana had one of their long talks. Greville had just left them, grumbling, in spite of an invitation to breakfast the next morning, and though he knew that he was expected at The Holms in six weeks' time, to make acquaintance with Alison's home, and to introduce himself to Mr. Merle. But Miss Carrington paid no attention to his boyish discontent; this hour belonged to her, she said, in a decided manner; Greville might talk to Roger, but she wanted Allie to herself.

So while the two young men paced up and down by the river, Alison and Miss Carrington sat in the dim studio, looking out into the moonlight. There was so much that they had to say to each other on this last night.

"You do not think me too hard-hearted to insist on a two years' engagement, Allie?" Miss Carrington said presently. "Mr. Moore has begged me over and over again to reconsider my decision, but, indeed, I think Greville is too young for such a responsibility. In two years he will be five-and-twenty."

"I would not have it otherwise, Aunt Di," returned Alison, quietly. "In two years' time, papa will be well and strong—at least, Dr. Greenwood tells us so—and Missie will be older; I can be spared then, and can leave home far more happily."

"Is Greville content with this?"

"I have talked to him, and made him see that we are both right. Of course we shall both feel the separation a little hard, but now I have promised to spend at least two months next summer at Moss-side, and he is to pay flying visits to The Holms, I think we ought to be content, and then there are the letters—letters are such a pleasure."

"And in two years Alison Merle is to be Alison Moore."

"I hope so, Aunt Di."

"Darling! that day will be a happy one for me. I love you both so much, and then I shall have you near me. Think of Fernleigh being your home."

"A beautiful home," she returned.

"Roger will miss you the most, dear."

"I hope not by that time, Aunt Di. Perhaps I ought not to speak of it; he has never given me the right to do so, but I think—I hope—Anna—may be able to comfort him for my absence."

"What makes you think so, dear?" she asked, very quietly; and yet the same thought had occurred to her.

"It is Roger's manner; it has changed so much of late. Once he used to be as friendly with Anna, but now he never mentions her name if he can help it, but when any one talks of her I can see the way he listens, and the look that comes into his eyes; he is always so pleased when I tell him she is coming to The Holms, and he is so nice with her, speaking so gently to her, and anticipating all her wishes; you could not doubt what it meant if you saw them together. And she is just as sweet to him as one could wish—very shy, but so simple and childlike."

"She is a dear little thing, and I dare say she has improved."

"Yes, indeed, even Missie owns she is almost pretty sometimes; not that that matters, when she always looks so sweet and good. Oh, Aunt Di, I have grown to love her so."

"Roger is a wise man," observed Miss Carrington, thoughtfully; "if he chooses Anna for his wife he will find her certainly 'above rubies.' There is the law of kindness in her lips; I never knew any one so perfectly gentle."

"Missie is actually growing fond of her; they will be nice companions for each other when I leave home. Oh, Aunt Di, how beautifully everything has turned out. Papa is better, and Missie is growing more amiable every day; Rudel is not so rough, and Poppie is the dearest little soul, and Miss Leigh is so much more cheerful."

"Heaven has accepted our sacrifice, Allie," returned Aunt Diana, solemnly; "a blessing has come down on your efforts in a way we never expected."

"'Give and it shall be given to you again,' is the law of love."

"Darling, I never loved you so much as when I sent you from me to do your duty."

(The End.)

A POT OF PAINT.

The Master of the House Gets the Decorating Fever.

"Tip the cat out of that rocker and make yourself comfortable,' said Mrs. Weeden, hospitably. "You look kind of used up. Spring cleaning?"

Mrs. Lipscombe leaned far back and settled the dispossessed cat in her lap.

"So the family say," she assented, "though I think myself it's nothing in the world but Joe's latest performance. Joe generally gets the painting fever when we women get the scrubbing fever; but seems as if this season he took it extra hard. He bought a pot of paint Saturday, and started in. First he did the window-boxes and the india-rubber tree tub; that was all right. Then he did the clothes poles. I wasn't particularly grateful when they weren't half-dry for Monday wash; still, they're an improvement. Then he did the two garden seats, and got so interested he forgot, and sat down on the one he'd just done while he finished up the other. Well, those trousers were pretty far gone, and I never did like a check, anyway. If he'd stopped there—but he didn't. There was some paint left, and he was bound to use it up.

"The girls planned long ago to have a party and some music as soon as the cleaning was done, and the parlor spandy-clean and fresh. 'Twas set for to-night; and this noon Linda went in to fix up. Well, she gave a kind of wild screech, followed by sounds like whooping-cough, and Bessy and I came flying to see what was wrong. Bessy gave one look, and off she went whooping and gargling and giggling worse than Linda; and the pair of them kept me so busy scolding and coaxing and slapping backs and ordering 'Now, girls, stop!' that I didn't really take in what it was all about till just as they were beginning to quiet down. Then my eyes lit on the mantelpiece again, and, if you'll believe it, off I went, worse than either of them!

"You know those two plaster busts on the two sides of the mantel-shelf—Mozart and Beethoven, three-quarter life-size? Well, Joseph had painted those! There they perched confronting us—off again, all three of us together, gurgling and whooping and choking and weeping like idiots—Mozart smiling jauntily and Beethoven scowling like a thunder-cloud, and both of them bright green!"

"Emily! No!" burst out Mrs. Weeden.

"Louisa! Yes!" rejoined Mrs. Lipscombe. "He means to bronze them later; but when he bronzed a Milton once, the white kept showing through in thin places, so he thought this time he'd put a dark coat under. Green is all right, he says, because bronze is always streaky with green when it's real, so if green should show through the bronzing it would only be more natural. But they've got to dry before they can be bronzed; and meanwhile they can't be touched or lifted; and the party's to-night! Well, as Linda says, our decorations are unique, and the only thing to do is to take it as a joke. But I was pretty tired this morning, and I suppose I really did laugh myself into hysterics. It sounds silly, but if you'd come suddenly on two pea-green immortals——"

"I never had hysterics in my life," announced Mrs. Weeden, firmly, "and I'm going to walk back with you when you go and take a peek myself."—Youth's Companion.

Badly Confused.

Lord Bramwell, says the biographer of that jurist, used to tell a story illustrating the complete paralysis which may affect the human mind at trying moments.

One day when he was on board a Rhine steamboat he noticed a lady, evidently in great distress, trying by signs to explain to the officials some matter of importance. Fancying that she was a countrywoman of his own, he asked:

"Do you speak English?"

The poor lady had really lost her head, and she could only stammer out, "Un peu"—that is, a little.

Then Lord Bramwell continued the conversation in French, but it became evident that the lady understood scarcely a word. German and Italian gave equally bad results. Finally she muttered audibly to herself:

"How I wish I were safe at home!"

"But surely you do speak English!" exclaimed the baron.

"I can't speak anything else," she sobbed. "That's what makes me so helpless among these foreigners."

Strictly Fresh Eggs.

There are summer resorts, remote from any agricultural communities, where fresh farm products are even harder to obtain than in the city. It was at such a place that the new boarder, who had eaten four or five breakfasts there, began to wonder why the eggs were invariably served fried.

"See here," he inquired one morning of the genial colored woman who waited upon him, "why do you always fry eggs here? Don't you ever boil them?"

"Oh-oh, yes, sah!" responded the waiter, pleasantly. 'Of co'se yo' kin have 'em boiled, if yo' wants 'em. But yo' know, sah, yo' takes de risk!'"—New York Times.

Modern Heroism.

The Victim—Help! Help! I'm drowning!

Would-Be Hero—Courage, my brave man! Just wait until I get a rope, a measuring rod, a Carnegie application blank, two witnesses and a notary public.—Bohemian Magazine.

STUTTERING TO BE CURED.

Vienna Public Schools Give a Special Course for Afflicted Pupils.

An interesting addition to the course of instruction in the public schools of Vienna is to be made in a short time by providing classes in four districts to overcome the defects in speech of children who stutter. United States Consul General Rublee at Vienna, who reports this matter to the State Department, says that the length of he course is five weeks and instruction is to be given during two hours of each weekday. The children are to withdraw from other school attendance, as it is essential that they devote themselves exclusively to the course for the cure of stuttering.

The co-operation of the parents is especially important to the success of the cure. During the period of the special instruction it is necessary that the children have a separate room at home where they can practice the exercises given them without any disturbance whatsoever. The parents must undertake to have the children practice their exercises at home for at least four hours daily, and during the first two weeks not to allow them to speak at all except to practice the exercises prescribed by the course of instruction.

Keeping silent is of such importance that the success of the course depends upon this requirement being strictly observed. Parents are particularly advised never to cast any doubt upon the effectiveness of the course or of the teachers. It is well known that stutterers lack self-confidence, and this must be taken in account in the treatment. The children should be encouraged by calling attention to progress that has been made, for stutterers are extremely susceptible to praise. Parents, however, should be careful to make no experiments and to make no tests.

At the end of the five weeks' course the instructor brings each pupil back to his regular school and indicates to his teacher what has been accomplished, besides giving advice concerning his further instruction. The teacher is requested to try to encourage and make permanent the new habits acquired. Children who have taken the special course in stuttering are examined afterward each month in order to determine what permanent results have been obtained.

Wit of the Youngsters

"I know why women laugh in their sleeves," said little Elmer. "Why, dear?" asked his mother. "Because that's where their funny bone is."

Teacher—Harry, can you explain the difference between "ayes" and "noes?" Harry—Yes, ma'am. You see with your eyes and smell with your nose.

Small Mabel was very restless the other night, and was unable to go to sleep. Finally she said: "Papa, please sing to me; that always makes me tired."

Teacher—How many zones are there? Small Boy—Six. Teacher—No, there are but five. However, you may name six—if you can. Small Bay—Torrid, north temperate, south temperate, north frigid, south frigid and ozone.

Mamma (in pantry)—Who has been drinking the milk, Johnny? Tell the truth now! Johnny—It was me, mamma; I wanted to see if it was sour. Mamma—Well, suppose it had been? Johnny—Why, I wouldn't have drank it.

Little Nell—What does your papa do? Little Bess—He's a horse doctor. Little Nell—Then I guess I'd better not play with you; I'm afraid you don't belong to our set. Little Bess—I don't see why. What does your papa do? Little Nell—He's a veterinary surgeon!

ODD MEASURE OF DISTANCE.

Blue Ridge Residents Have Peculiar Expressions, Travelers Think.

Burton Holmes, the traveler and lecturer, told the following stories a short time ago in reference to measuring distances. He said that, while he is more or less familiar with the different words that in different countries have reference to what is known in our country as a mile, such as a league in France or a knot on the water, all his wits were necessary to straighten out the replies that he received down in the Blue Ridge mountains in North Carolina, here in our own country:

"We had been riding for an hour or two, hoping almost against hope that we would run across some mountaineer's hut and elicit the information we desired relative to the location of our camp, or, if possible, persuade him to be our guide. We finally reached a dilapidated-looking two-room log cabin and I rode my horse up into what by courtesy we can call a yard, and hollered. After several attempts the door was opened and one of those typical long-haired, half-civilized mountaineers stood in the doorway. I knew that I must be somewhere in the vicinity of our camping place, but was not sure how far we had come, so I put my question, and in reply my informant stepped from his doorway and, pointing in the direction in which we were going, said: 'Ez near ez I kin reckin hits bout ez fer ez yer kin see, then about that fer agin.'

"A day or two afterward, in practically the same locality, I was asking the distance from the farm where we had stopped for lunch to the town we were making for, which was the county seat of Mitchell county, and the good lady who had prepared our noonday meal informed me that 'twern't fur, only 'bout two whoops en a sight.' At this last bit of information I was completely puzzled and remained so for several hours, until it dawned on me that she meant to convey the idea that the town was as far away from where I was then as my voice would carry twice and from that point as far as I could see."

Another thing which makes a "kicker" disagreeable, is that he is usually proud of it.

CYRUS H. McCORMICK PROPHET OF THE PRAIRIES

CYRUS HALL MCCORMICK, son of Robert McCormick and Mary Anna Hall, was born at Walnut Grove, Rock Ridge County, Va., one hundred years ago. His father, farmer and inventor, was of revolutionary stock. His great-grandfather was an Indian fighter in Pennsylvania. On his father's farm of 1,800 acres young McCormick was equipped for the struggle which was finally to make him the foremost manufacturer of the world. He learned the rudiments in a little field schoolhouse. With his father and brother he worked with his hands in the farm carpenter shop and smithy. He hammered iron and shaped wood. He held the plow in the furrow. He cared for horses and cattle.

Robert McCormick, the father, had fashioned a hemp brake, a clover huller, a bellows, a threshing machine and had essayed a reaping machine, which, however, proved impracticable. His ambition to perfect a reaper and his disappointment in not achieving was an incentive to the boy who early displayed an inventive ability which, in his case, may be attributed to both heredity and environment. At the age of 15 young McCormick invented a grain cradle. At 21 he patented a hillside plow. Two years later he built a self-sharpening plow and during the same twelvemonth was working on the details of his masterpiece.

The need of a machine to replace the sickle and the scythe had been recognized by other than the McCormicks. The Royal Agricultural Society of Great Britain had offered a prize for the invention of such a device. In this country Obed Hussey, a seaman of Nantucket, was in 1833 granted the first patent for a practical reaper. Two years before, in 1831, Cyrus Hall McCormick had with his own hands fashioned every part of a reaping machine, which he exhibited to neighbors in Virginia. His patent was not taken out until 1834.

At the age of 36 McCormick started on horseback for the West, in whose development he was to play so great a part. From the hills of Virginia he rode to the prairies of Illinois. His prophetic vision saw the sun-burned grass blossom into fields of golden grain. His imagination was fired by the thought of the time to come when the trails would be main traveled roads, when the isolated clearings of the pioneers would become great cities, when the hum of water wheels would be heard along the banks of the streams. He anticipated the time when the wheat fields of the State of his choice should be known throughout the world. He forecast the day when the pitiful cry for bread by the starving hordes of the Old World would be heard in the land of plenty and the answer returned in ship loads of wheat and flour. He had faith to believe that great industrial communities would be born and men and women and children come to people the wonderful land. In all this was the bright particular star of his hope and faith and being—the reaper he had invented, in which he believed and which he determined to force into universal use. And his dream came true.

Mr. McCormick located in Chicago a full-grown man, says the Record-Herald, and within ten years the McCormick reaper was known in every part of the country. At the world's fair in London in 1851 the "Grand Council Medal" was awarded to McCormick, and, although the London Times had at first ridiculed his invention as a "cross between an Astley chariot, a wheelbarrow and a flying machine," it later conceded that "the McCormick reaper is worth the whole cost of the exposition."

Ten years that brought prosperity and fame were not without strife. A consistent individualist, Mr. McCormick would never brook competition. As other men came forward with similar inventions, the agricultural machinery world became a scene of battle. For years scores of lawyers were engaged in court by the warring harvester kings. Bitter rivalry developed. The economic advantages of combination, the wastefulness of competition, however, brought together warring interests of the past and welded them into a great harvester company, with an output of 700,000 harvesting machines a year, a revenue of $73,000,000, a capital of $120,000,000, an army of 70,000 employes, a square mile of factories, trackage of 12,000 cars at its 100 warehouses and six busy railroads of its own.

BEAUTY OF NEW SOCIAL CABINET

MRS. ALBERT AKIN

The beauty of the Mrs. Taft's social cabinet will be Mrs. Albert Akin, daughter of Attorney General Wickersham. Mrs. Akin, whose home is in New York City, is noted as one of the most beautiful women of the younger set. Her mother, the wife of the new Attorney General, is expected to be one of the new social leaders of the capital and Mrs. Akin will assist the Wickersham household in the receptions and entertainments. Mrs. Taft, it is said, also will enlist the services of Mrs. Akin in social activities.

PLANT GUARDIANS.

Ants Which Savagely Defend a Tree in South America.

Ant defenders of plants and trees are some of nature's pretty marvels. The cecropia adenopus is a remarkable tree of south Brazil widely distributed through the tropics. Its slender trunk is crowned with long leaves at the ends of the branches.

A few active ants run continually along the branches and the leaves, but if the tree is shaken slightly an army of ants rush out by small apertures ready for a savage assault on the intruder. The ant is the terrible guardian that the tree has retained to protect it from its most formidable enemy, the leaf cutter ant.

The defenders rarely leave their retreat, where they live on small whitish egg shaped bodies about one-twelfth of an inch long, known as Mueller's corpuscles. These are formed of delicate tissue, rich in proteids and oil, as rations for the garrison of defender ants to feed upon. The curious arrangement by which entrance is made to the hollow stem has been studied by W. Schimper.

Just above the point of insertion of each leaf extends nearly to the superior node a superficial groove, at whose end is a rounded depression. There the tissue is thin, like a diaphragm in a tube, and it also is soft. The hole by which the ant enters is always pierced at this spot. The ants seem to have made their entrance through the groove originally because it was at the top. In the course of this plant's further development natural selection augmented these natural advantages so that finally the thin, frail diaphragm as it exists to-day was developed.

How Heavy Is a Pound.

The favorite question with the school committeemen of olden time was, we are told, "What is the heavier, a pound of feathers or a pound of lead?" The first rash answer used almost always to be, "A pound of lead." Then, of course, from the older pupils would come the reply, "Both alike."

If this question were asked to-day the old-time querist might receive a decided surprise, for the pound of feathers could easily be proved to be the heavier. A single experiment is all the evidence needed.

With any accurate scales weigh out a pound of lead, using ordinary shot for convenience. Pour the shot into one of the pans of a balance. For the feathers, a light muslin bag will be needed, and care must be taken that feathers and bag together do not weigh more than a pound. When the bag of feathers is put into the other pan of the balance, the beam will, after a few oscillations, come to rest exactly level.

So far the verdict "Both alike" seems to be proved. But place the balance on the receiver of an air pump, with lead and feathers undisturbed. Cover the whole with the glass bell jar, and exhaust the air. Slowly the feathers sink, and the lead kicks the beam. The pound of feathers is heavier than the pound of lead.

The truth is that what we call a pound was not such in fact; for the atmosphere buoys up everything within it in proportion to the bulk of the object and the feathers, being of greater bulk than the lead, are supported by the air to a considerably greater extent than the lead. Removed from this supporting medium, their true weight is made evident.

A Remarkable Case.

He began after the usual form, to-wit:

"I have a little boy at home who——"

They interrupted him after much the usual form, to-wit:

"I'pardon me, old man. I must be going along. Sorry I can't wait, but I'm due at the office."

"Just a minute," he urged, buttonholing the two nearest. "It won't take me a minute."

They sighed and resigned themselves.

"All I want to say," he went on, "is that I have a little boy at home who never said a bright thing in his life."

They grasped his hands with a thankfulness that could find no expression in words, and then he added:

"He's too small. He can't talk yet."

Policeman (to loiterer)—Now, then, what are you doing here? Loiterer—Well what are you a-doing here? Policeman—Can't you see? I'm doing my duty. Loiterer—An' can't you see I'm a-makin' the duty for you to do?—Philadelphia Inquirer.